



ARIZONA BOARD OF REGENTS

Remarks by Gov. Jan Brewer

Thursday, January 28, 2010

Good afternoon!

It is great to be with you – especially on the campus of ASU West.

In my first term in the state Legislature, I was a part of the West Valley legislative coalition that fought to establish Arizona State University West.

So, it is always heartening to come here and see this campus continue to bloom.

First, let me recognize Fred Boice and Robert Bulla for their years of dedicated service on the Board of Regents.

Their guidance and expertise have been a great gift to Arizona, and we are grateful for what they have contributed.

Earlier this morning, I announced my selection of Mark Killian as a Regent. He joins other newcomers Richard Myers and Student Regent Jennifer Ginther who are stepping in to serve the state with the same loyal diligence shown by their predecessors.

Thank you, and welcome.

Let there be no doubt that the key to Arizona's economic and fiscal recovery is JOBS.

As Governor, I spend a significant portion of my time meeting with business leaders who are looking to relocate to Arizona. . . . And these are jobs that will help to diversify our economic base.

Using our new tax incentive law, I am focusing on the renewable energy sector. My goal is to land the top solar manufacturers in the world . . . and we are well on our way.

Just yesterday, SunTech Power Holdings announced that its first U. S. manufacturing plant would be located in Goodyear. Now SunTech is no small fish -- it is one of the world's largest solar panel manufacturers.

In landing SunTech, we were competing with Texas -- which has a huge fund for the Governor to write checks directly to employers who relocate there. You might ask -- How could Arizona compete with a Texas-size check with a lot of zeros? We had a not-so-secret weapon called . . . Arizona State University.

In our meetings with SunTech, its officials told us of the importance of A S U establishing -- right here in the Valley -- what has been called the world's most comprehensive and sophisticated facility for testing and certification of solar energy equipment. Now that is a STRATEGIC asset.

I tell you this story to demonstrate the key role our universities -- and our education system in general -- play in developing and diversifying our economy. While Arizona must be competitive on taxes, businesses are looking for a good educational system too.

Keeping that principle in mind, my proposed budget for F Y 11 protects education to the maximum extent possible under these HORRIBLE circumstances. Yes, there are cuts -- but nothing like what could have been -- or what may be if we don't make the right decisions in the coming weeks and months.

One of my key decision points in developing the budget was whether to ask for a waiver from the federal Maintenance of Effort requirements to take us below 2006 funding levels. I did NOT. I do NOT believe it is a viable option if we want a vibrant economic future for Arizona.

As you know, there are many who want me to request the waiver. And there will be continual pressure to do so.

If obtained, the waiver would replace the MOE requirement with a proportionate budget reduction requirement.

My understanding is that the universities and the K-12 system would be lumped together in a single category. Under this scenario, the universities COULD be cut at a far greater percentage basis than the K-12 system.

We need to work TOGETHER to ensure that a waiver is NOT needed. My budget demonstrates that we CAN balance the state budget WITHOUT a waiver if we

get the additional temporary revenues we need. While we are making progress at the Legislature on this front, we need your help.

As you know -- once F Y 11 is over -- the M O E goes away. For that reason -- last Spring -- I challenged you all to develop more affordable, predictable and sustainable models of higher education for Arizona students and parents.

I've been following your discussions -- and of course -- our final and WINNING submission to the Lumina Foundation ... but I'm eager to hear your progress.

WE have to be AGGRESSIVE in implementing these models and not move at the normal university or governmental pace.

This type of cooperation between you and the community colleges is unprecedented.

I know you believe some of the critical steps will require funding -- and I wish it could be provided.

But, it can't be.

At the same time, the need for more cost-effective degrees has never been greater. We must continue to push the envelope and keep our eye on students and their success.

There are many students who would like small schools focused on instruction of high-demand areas ... and who don't mind if there isn't a football team.

I'd like to see a greater emphasis on some mix of programs that lower the total cost of a degree like "Three Plus One" -- where a student can take his first three years of coursework at a community college. Another option would be "joint admissions" programs -- where it is clear from the beginning to which university the student will be transferring.

I am also interested in continuing a closer look at a state college model. We have long needed something in between two-year community colleges and full-fledged research universities.

Finally, we should also pursue common sense ideas like "common course numbering," where English 101 MEANS English 101 -- on every campus. In fact, I believe a bill is being heard in Senator Huppenthal's committee today regarding common course numbering.

I know that there is no one magic cure, but in these critical financial times and when student success is more important than ever, we must continue to make sure that every opportunity is pursued.

I will do that.

And I know you will, too.

Thank you very much.